REMARKS

Claims 1-32 remain in the application.

Claims 3-11 are allowable subject to being rewritten in independent form.

Claims 12-32 are withdrawn from consideration.

The claims remaining for consideration are claims 1 and 2.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) on U.S. Patent No. 6,831,227 to Weise et al.

Claims 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) on Weise et al '227 taken with U.S. Patent No. 6,733,345 to Weise et al.

This application concerns a square electrical mud box for use in poured concrete installations. The box has three electrical nonmetallic connectors on each of the four sidewalls. The middle connector on each sidewall is sized for attaching one-half inch electrical nonmetallic tubing. Both of the outer connectors on one pair of opposite sides are sized for attaching three quarter inch electrical nonmetallic tubing. On the other pair of opposite sides, one outer connector is for attaching three quarter inch tubing while the other outer connector is for attaching one inch tubing. The described arrangement makes the box very versatile while minimizing the number of adapters that may be required for modifying a box in the field.

As a practical matter, all twelve of the connectors on the box would never be used at the same time, and many of them would be superfluous for a given installation. However, having the redundant connectors available greatly simplifies field installation by having the necessary connector sizes right on the box instead of requiring a field installer to locate and install adapters for converting the connectors on the box to the necessary sizes.

Weise et al '227 relates to a convertible box that can be customized in the field by an installer. Inserts that may have more than two connectors of different sizes are attachable to the box sidewalls. Thus, if the installation calls for two one-half inch connectors on a sidewall, an insert having such connectors is attached to the box, and so on for other connector sizes and sidewalls.

The arrangement of Weise et al '227 would require a large number of different inserts for customizing the boxes in the field for a given installation. This is precisely the type of problem that the improvement of the present application solves.

There is no reason or motivation whatsoever for a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the Weise et al '227 system with inserts that would make it possible to assemble a box according to claim 1 of the present application. Furthermore, even if suitable inserts were available, there would be no reason or motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to assemble a box with connectors according to claim 1 because many of the connectors would be redundant. The arrangement of Weise et al '227 makes it possible to customize the box by providing the exact sizes and numbers of connectors on each sidewall.

Weise et al '227 provides a completely different approach to the problem of providing a box with the necessary number and sizes of connectors to accommodate virtually any field situation. Weise et al '227 solves the problem by in effect manufacturing the necessary box in the field by using custom inserts for each box sidewall. In the present application, excess and redundant connectors are provided right on the box so that the box can be used for virtually any situation encountered in the field.

Claim 2 recites the concave external box corners. The Examiner contends that it would be obvious to make the external corners of Weise et al concave, but provides no motivation for doing so. The concave external corners of the box in the present application maintain generally uniform material thickness at the box corners that have internal bosses 40-43 to facilitate molding. Weise et al '345 has internal bosses 48a, 48c, 48d and 48f in FIG. 1 at the box corners, but did not make the external corners concave and there is no motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to do so.

In the absence of more pertinent art, this application is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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